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SUBJECT: UN/IRAQ: ASSESSMENT MISSION FOR KUWAIT BORDER
MAINTENANCE

REF: KUWAIT 659

¶1. Begin Summary. USUN met March 2 with Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) official Eliza Kimball, who had just returned from Kuwait. Kimball reported on the February mission of four UN staff to assess the Iraq-Kuwait border posts, consistent with reftel. This assessment mission was intended to precede a full-scale mission to maintain the border posts. Kimball expects the maintenance mission to begin o/a November 1 and to last approximately six weeks. The UN will develop a detailed request for MNF security assistance that will be formally provided to USUN. DPKO will discuss funding for the maintenance mission with the Iraqi and Kuwaiti Missions, but prefers that the two missions share the costs equally. End Summary.

¶2. Kimball said the assessment had been satisfactorily concluded. She noted that 105 of the 106 border posts were fully assessed. Border post 105 was assessed but from afar. The assessment team, which included Iraqis and Kuwaitis as well as four UN staff from headquarters, could not access the border post from the Kuwaiti side of the border and did not have appropriate security for cross-border movements.

¶3. Kimball anticipated that the maintenance project would begin early November. In advance, DPKO will draft a concept of operations and consult with the Iraqis and Kuwaitis on it. DPKO will contract out the bulk of the work and anticipates several months to comply with UN contracting procedures. DPKO will also work with the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) to determine security requirements and a request for MNF assistance. The bulk of personnel at the border will be private contractors, who would presumably have their own contract security, but Kimball expects one or two UN staff also to supervise the project and be present at the border. The UN will want MNF security for these staff, and Kimball said the Kuwaitis would also want this MNF assistance. The current estimate is of a six-week project. USUN will forward to Washington a formal request for security assistance once the UN provides it.

¶4. According to UNSCR 706 (1991) and an exchange of letters between the SYG and the UNSC President endorsing the SYG's report (S/22558), the Kuwaitis and Iraqis should share the costs of the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission. DPKO and the Kuwaitis have suggested that it is also

reasonable for the two governments to share the costs of subsequent maintenance. Kimball argues that this arrangement is consistent with precedent and also guards against future Iraqi accusations that the border maintenance project somehow served Kuwaiti interests. The Kuwaiti DCM Mansour al-Otaibi, in a separate conversation with PolOff, said his government would pay 50 percent of the project costs, but would like the Iraqis to pay the other 50 percent. In previous conversations on the subject, the Iraqis at the New York Mission have said they do not have instructions on this point from Baghdad. This issue does not have to be decided immediately, but the UN will need to know where funds are coming from before they enter into a contract for the November maintenance mission. (Comment: USUN will encourage DPKO to work with the Iraqi and Kuwaiti Missions to reach a mutually agreeable solution. One possibility may be for the Iraqis to use escrowed Oil-for-Food monies to pay their share of the UN mission. End Comment.)

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